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ABSTRACT

The major topics covered in these newsletters include: (1) background information on Project Education Reform; (2) "The Governors' 1991 Report on Education: Time for Results"; (3) elementary education and the National Governors' Association (NGA) project; (4) the goals of 16 school sites in carrying out recommendations from the NGA report on education; (5) Oak Ridge (Tennessee) school improvement objectives; (6) the purpose and functions of regional education laboratories; (7) evaluating education from the national perspective; (8) the progress of Project Education Reform; (9) preparing for the future; (10) implementation of reforms at Montrose County School District and Mapleton Adams School District in Colorado; and (11) the importance of education on governors' agenda. (JD)

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PROJECT EDUCATION REFORM:

TIME FOR RESULTS

Newsletter. Volume 1, Numbers 1-3, May-December 1987

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# Project Education Reform: *Time For Results*

**Volume 1, Number 1** **May 1987**

This newsletter is distributed by the United States Department of Education on behalf of Project Education Reform: *Time For Results.*

## What Is Project Education Reform?

President Ronald Reagan, showing his support for the Governors' 1991 Report on Education: *Time For Results*, attended the conference sponsored by the U.S. Department of Education, March 25–26, in Columbia, Missouri, at the invitation of Governor John Ashcroft. The national conference called Project Education Reform: *Time For Results* was hosted by Secretary of Education William J. Bennett and was held to discuss the plans and progress of the 16 school districts that are implementing major education reforms recommended by the governors.

The conference was attended by about 1,500 Missouri educators, school superintendents and representatives from the 16 districts, Secretary Bennett, Governor Ashcroft, and Governors Norman Bangherter of Utah, Carroll Campbell of South Carolina, and John Sununu of New Hampshire.

The U.S. Department of Education, in cooperation with the National Governors' Association, has involved eight states in this education reform project. Two school districts from each of the states will implement recommendations outlined in *Time For Results*, the education report initiated and chaired by Governor Lamar Alexander of Tennessee and released by the governors in August 1986.

In his address to the group, President Reagan praised the governors for making education a priority and states and local communities for their efforts to improve the quality of the nation's schools. The President stressed, "... basic skills, standards, discipline, work, family support, ethical principles—this is the new American consensus on the secret of quality education."

*continued on page 5*

**President Reagan visits education reform conference.**

## Bells of Reform

*President Reagan closed the U.S. Department of Education's education reform conference in Columbia, Missouri by presenting two school bells: one to Governor Ashcroft and one to Secretary Bennett. The following is taken from the President's speech:*

The bells of education reform started ringing with *A Nation at Risk* in 1983. All over America, people who care about education have kept ringing the bells. Important people—like citizens who have said they're willing to pay more taxes for better schools, parents who have become more involved with their children's education, teachers who have joined career ladders and renewed their skills with staff development, decisionmakers like school board members and legislators, who have set higher standards. And, of course, *our governors* with their willingness to make education a priority and their 1991 Report on Education: *Time For Results.*

They and many, many more have rung the bells of education reform. And we must keep the bells ringing.

Today, I am presenting a bell to Governor Ashcroft for the governors and one to Secretary Bennett, so we will keep the bells of education reform ringing in America.

## Follow-Through Is Everything

*Thomas H. Kean, Governor of New Jersey*

Working on *Time for Results* with former Governor Lamar Alexander of Tennessee, Governor Bill Clinton of Arkansas, and our colleagues was a fascinating enterprise. Unlike all the other education reports in recent years, this one involved governors giving advice to governors. But even as we worked, we knew that the follow-through would be what would count. That kind of follow-through would require special allies. In the end it would require a unique partnership among state, federal, and local education leaders.

Soon after we presented *Time for Results* last year, I participated in a conference call with Secretary of Education William Bennett and Governors Alexander and Clinton

**Governor Thomas Kean talks with elementary school children.**

to plan what *we* would do to follow up. We agreed to challenge the governors who drafted *Time for Results* to a joint venture with a group of outstanding local school

*continued on page 3*

# First Lessons and the NGA Project

*First Lessons*, Secretary William Bennett's September 1986 report on elementary education in America, has been suggested as a help in implementing the Governors' 1991 Report on Education: *Time For Results*. Nelson Smith, Director of the Research Applications Division of the U.S. Department of Education, suggests that *First Lessons* offers a vision of educational improvement that is remarkably compatible with the NGA report. *First Lessons* appeared just 2 weeks after *Time For Results*.

Smith suggests that *First Lessons* may be especially useful in two ways:

**First, as a catalyst.** You will find strong support in *First Lessons* for organizational innovation, school-site autonomy and professionalism, the role of parents, and other issues addressed by the governors. The report is written to inspire as well as inform, and the language can help galvanize reform efforts in your own community.

**Second, as a source of ideas.** In a number of respects, *First Lessons* can serve as a "field manual" for implementing broad reforms suggested by NGA. It provides a host of good ideas, drawn from research and practice, about specific ways of dealing with management issues, curriculum, the parent-school relationship, and other questions.

Smith uses the example of the Chandler, Arizona Unified School District, which decided to revamp an entire elementary school along the lines suggested in *First Lessons*. He suggests that such an effort will go a long way toward achieving the goals set by the governors.

Listed below are proposals drawn from the NGA recommendations along with descriptions of how *First Lessons* supports the *Time For Results* proposals.

**Parent Involvement & Choice** – Create a structure and climate for effective parent involvement.

*First Lessons:*

- Asserts that parents play the central role in a child's education and should be empowered to play it successfully.
- Says report cards should include space where schools can suggest how parents might discharge their own educational duties more effectively.
- Provides strong support for the concept of parental choice: "Parents' oversight of their children's education ought not be limited to the margins."
- Says schools must also address the issues of parents who are failing their children and changing family structures.

**Readiness** – Establish early childhood development programs for at-risk 3- and 4-year-old children.

*First Lessons:*

- Stresses early reading experience and the role of the family.
- Examines various proposals for schooling 4-year-olds.

**Readiness** – Provide information on successful parenting practices to parents of preschool children and students.

*First Lessons:*

- Is directed, in large part, to parents themselves.
- Stresses that other members of the community should provide assistance to families unable to support their children's education adequately.
- Provides examples of innovation, among them the "Parents as First Teachers" program in the State of Missouri, which specifically deals with children under 3.

**Teaching** – Redesign the organization of schools to create a more productive working and learning environment.

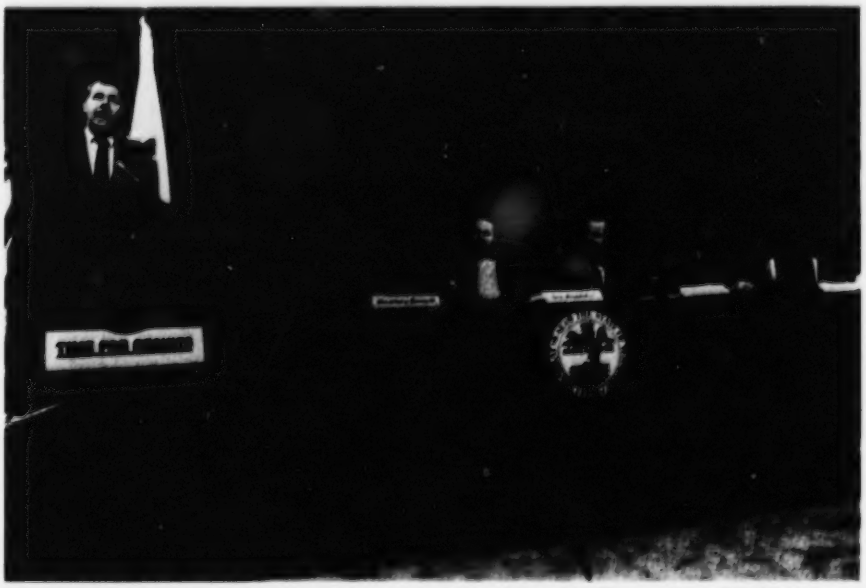
*First Lessons*

- Urges that schools "eke out more instructional time from the present schedule," and raises the possibility of a longer school year.
- Argues for better use of homework, creative curricular strategies, and freeing teachers of noninstructional chores.
- Supports the *empowerment* of teachers.
- Offers responses to the problem of class size.
- Seeks less fragmentation in special education classes and those for the gifted.

**Teaching** – Redesign the structure of the teaching career.

*First Lessons:*

- Says "the essential point" is to raise salaries "on the basis of quality rather than seniority, performance rather than tenure, merit rather than uniformity."
- Supports increased professionalism and collegiality for teachers.



**Secretary Bennett announces project with Governors Lamar Alexander, Thomas Kean, Bill Clinton, and John Sununu.**

- Says that while no one specific preparatory route ought to be required for entry into the classroom, certain standards or criteria should be set and strictly maintained.
- Argues that incentives should promote inservice training in academic areas rather than in "methods" courses.
- Says certification should reflect the demand for excellence, not just be a matter of amassing course credits.

**Leadership & Management** – Create training programs for school administrators which involve partnerships between colleges, state or regional academies, or businesses and schools.

*First Lessons*
- Acknowledges the complexity of the contemporary principal's role.
- Says "...(T)oday's methods of educating and licensing principals seem better designed to produce survivors than entrepreneurs."
- Supports the "deregulation" of the principalship.

**Leadership & Management** – Provide for school-site management with accountability.

*First Lessons*
- Cites legal precedent and research to support strong discipline.
- Provides suggestions on how to use instructional time better.
- Examines the "reciprocal relationship" between parents and the school.
- Affirms the notion of "standards for all children."

**Readiness** – Design a system of valid and reliable assessments of student performance so that students, parents, and teachers can work to correct deficiencies.

*First Lessons:*
- Under "Standards For All Children," asserts the importance of "fair, complete, and periodic assessment."
- Calls for new methods of testing "hands-on" science programs.

**School Facilities** – Provide for shared use of facilities, with particular attention to community groups providing daycare and services for "latchkey" children.

*First Lessons:*
- Draws attention to the *need* for child-centered community programs, whether located in school or elsewhere.
- Discusses the needs of the alarming number of latchkey kids.
- Cites alternative daycare programs: mutual child care agreements, YMCA, employers, and other community groups.
- Cites examples of useful programs.

**How To Order**

Copies of *First Lessons* are available for $4.25 from the Government Printing Office. There is a 25 percent discount for orders over 100 copies.

The address is:
Superintendent of Documents
U.S. Government Printing Office
Washington, DC 20402

Order #: 065-000-00259-1

You may also order by phone, (202) 783-3238, which will help speed delivery. Payment over the phone must be made with a major credit card.

The Research Applications Division of the U.S. Department of Education can provide at no cost a single copy of the report, which may then be photocopied. For this complimentary copy, call Gloria Herbert, at (202) 357-6202.

# Follow-Through

*cont. from page 1*

leaders. It was to be an exchange of commitments. The governors would agree to take their own advice, and the school superintendents would agree to conceive and carry out their own plans in areas related to our report.

The objectives were simple. We wanted to put good ideas into practice. We wanted to identify the obstacles, regardless of source, and remove them. Our criteria for picking the 16 school districts were just as simple. We wanted to work with school districts known for strong leadership, solid planning skills, and strong support from boards, teachers, and the community.

We pulled 13 topics from the recommendations in our report and invited school districts to work on any three. No grant money is attached to this program, only plenty of hard work among like-minded people, and the promise of recognition.

The governors and the Secretary are interested in this project as a way to demonstrate action on the national education agenda. But we are also trying to say some other things. We don't care half so much about particular programs as we do about the results. We want to encourage an attitude that sets high standards, and then gives people close to the job the freedom to pick the best methods to achieve those targets. We know that getting results requires taking risks and accepting the consequences. Too often, that kind of behavior is discouraged in American education. And yet it is essential to our future. That is why we selected our companions in this venture so carefully.

The project has attracted well-deserved attention to these school districts, to the vital roles of school superintendent and principal, and to the possibilities of American education.

I am watching these districts with interest. I know what they've been able to do in the past. I'm imagining what they are capable of in the future – more, I believe, than we or they would have suspected.

**The Next Issue Will Highlight How This Project Will Be Evaluated and Assessed**

# School-Site Leaders Selected

**To Carry Out Recommendations from the National Governors' Association Report on Education, *Time For Results***

### Arkansas

Dr. Angela Sewall
Associate Superintendent
Little Rock Central High School
18 West Markham
Little Rock, Arkansas 72201

Dr. Jim Rollins
Superintendent
Springdale School System
Springdale, Arkansas 72765

### Colorado

Dr. Michael Severino
Superintendent
Adams County School District
591 East 80th Street
Denver, Colorado 80229

Dr. Robert Cito
Superintendent
Montrose Schools
126 South 5th Street
Montrose, Colorado 81402

### Missouri

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Superintendent
Columbia School District
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Columbia, Missouri 65203

Dr. Robert L. Henley
Superintendent
Independence School District
1231 South Windsor
Independence, Missouri 64055

### New Hampshire

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Associate Superintendent
Timberlane Regional School District
P.O. Box 8
Atkinson, New Hampshire 03811

Dr. Edgar R. Melanson
Superintendent
White Mountains Regional School District
21 Highland Street
Whitefield, New Hampshire 03598

### New Jersey

Dr. Harry Galinsky
Superintendent
Paramus Public Schools
Paramus, New Jersey 07652

Dr. James Caulfield
Superintendent
Union Township Public Schools
Union, New Jersey 07083

### South Carolina

Dr. James Wilsford
Superintendent
Orangeburg School District #5
578 Ellis Avenue
Orangeburg, South Carolina 29115

Dr. Harold Patterson
Superintendent
Spartanburg School District #7
Spartanburg, South Carolina 29301

### Tennessee

Dr. Willie W. Herenton
Superintendent
Memphis City Schools
2597 Avery, Room 214
Memphis, Tennessee 38112

Dr. Robert J. Smallridge
Superintendent
Oak Ridge Schools
P.O. Box 930
Oak Ridge, Tennessee 37831

### Utah

Dr. James G. Bergera
Superintendent
Board of Education Provo City
280 West, 940 North
Provo, Utah 84604

Dr. John W. Bennion
Superintendent
Salt Lake City School District
440 East, 1st South
Salt Lake City, Utah 84111

**Governor Sununu meets with project site leaders.**

## Working Mission Statement

Each of the 16 site leaders is to select three to four of the 13 "actions" under the six major categories in the Governors' 1991 Report on Education: *Time For Results*. The site leaders are to identify ongoing school programs which reflect their selected actions and develop and evaluate them for a period ending in the summer of 1991.

In this way, each school site will function as an informal laboratory of education reform. Each "laboratory" should:

- document intended and actual program results, using descriptive as well as empirical data. These results should reflect diverse approaches to the same, broad mission;
- identify local, state, and federal barriers to their work and make cogent recommendations on how to lift those barriers; and
- select programs that are valuable and important to other school systems in their respective states.

The efforts of the site leaders should result in other states and school systems across the nation a) following the laboratories' progress, b) adopting and developing actions which demonstrate results, and c) examining closely the conventional practices and structures which are barriers to the reform movement and effective education.

To carry out this project, several groups have distinct and continuing responsibilities regarding the site leaders' programs: governors, governors' aides, chief state school officers of the departments of education and state boards, the National Governors' Association (NGA), the United States Department of Education, national education associations including the National Education Association (NEA) and the American Federation of Teachers (AFT), and other school systems.

# Goals of the Sixteen Sites

Little Rock Central High School, Arkansas
- Examine site management.
- Establish school-university ties.
- Identify ways to lower dropout rates.
- Construct tutoring program.

Springdale High School, Arkansas
- Redesign organization of schools including the Sizer Project: Coalition of Schools.
- Create parent involvement.
- Establish alternatives for dropouts.

Adams County School District, Colorado
- Expand student assessment system.
- Work with high risk 3- to 5-year-olds served by existing programs.
- Expand alternative education programs for at-risk secondary students.
- Redesign the school organization.

Montrose County School District, Colorado
- Create effective parent involvement.
- Provide successful parenting practices.
- Establish alternative program for dropouts.
- Redesign the organization of schools including allowing for more teacher decisionmaking and different grade configurations.

Columbia School District, Missouri
- Examine early childhood programs.
- Examine dropout programs.
- Examine parent and community involvement.
- Examine administrative training.

Independence School District, Missouri
- Examine organization of schools.
- Examine the teaching career including the career ladder.
- Enhance parenting skills.
- Use technology for classroom instruction.

Timberlane Regional School District, New Hampshire
- Examine assessment program.
- Use challenge grants for teacher innovation.
- Use technology for reading, science, English, business.

White Mountains Regional School District, New Hampshire
- Examine assessment program.
- Use challenge grants for teacher innovation.
- Use technology for planning and instruction.

Paramus Public Schools, New Jersey
- Establish early childhood program for at-risk 3- and 4-year-olds.
- Implement dropout alternative for high schoolers.
- Create climate for parental involvement.
- Develop system to train principals.

Union Township School District, New Jersey
- Develop microwave television broadcast network.
- Enhance dropout prevention and recovery programs.
- Expand community use of schools.

Orangeburg School District #5, South Carolina
- Examine teaching career, particularly the role of lead teachers, incentives for performance, the teaching environment, and regulations.
- Examine student readiness and particularly the needs of at-risk children and parents of at-risk children.
- Use technologies to reduce paperwork and assist instruction.

Spartanburg School District, South Carolina
- Develop systems to evaluate proposals.
- Create a climate for parent involvement.
- Establish early childhood programs for at-risk children.
- Review plans for educational technologies.

Memphis School District, Tennessee
- Create a better environment.
- Develop assessment program for administrators to measure outcomes.

Oak Ridge School District, Tennessee
- Redesign organization and restructure teaching career.
- Develop staff training programs in the use of technologies.
- Design comprehensive parenting programs.

Provo City Schools, Utah
- Redesign structures of the teaching career including career ladders.
- Redesign the organization of schools.
- Create training programs for school administrators involving partnership with non-Provo school agencies.
- Design system of student assessment.

Salt Lake City School District, Utah
- Restructure teaching career including a career ladder.
- Train and evaluate principals.
- Enhance student testing.
- Construct dropout program.

## What Is Project Education Reform?

*cont. from page 1*

President Reagan also assigned Secretary Bennett to prepare a "report card" in April 1988 that will show progress in education and describe reforms that have worked.

Such reforms were discussed by the governors:
- Citing ways of improving teaching, Governor Bangherter said that governors "must make necessary changes to enhance the quality of our educational system."
- Governor Sununu, Chairman of the *Time For Results* Task Force on Technology, cited the "opportunities for tremendous benefits in improving classroom management and strengthening student skills which can be achieved through the introduction of technology in the classrooms."
- Governor Campbell said that assessment and accountability are used to evaluate the results of the $1.2 billion his state spends on education.

In their planning meeting the previous day, the 16 site superintendents discussed their projects which include restructuring teaching, more autonomy at the school level, student assessment, what works with high risk students, development of parent involvement, choice, and the use of technology to improve education.

Governor Ashcroft closed the conference with a short presentation called "Preparing for the 21st Century: An Executive Briefing on State Educational Excellence."

## Actions Local School Boards Can Take to Implement *Time For Results*

*Note:* Page references are to *Time for Results*, the Governors' 1991 Report on Education.

**Teaching**
- Redesign the organization of schools to create more productive working and learning environments (page 38).
- Redesign the structure of the teaching career (page 39).

**Leadership and Management**
- Develop a system to evaluate principals effectively and accurately (page 59).
- Create training programs for school administrators which involve partnerships with colleges, state or regional academies, businesses and schools (page 59).
- Provide for school-site management with accountability (page 59).

**Parent Involvement and Choice**
- Create a structure and climate for effective parent involvement (page 85).

**Readiness**
- Establish early childhood development programs for at-risk 3- and 4-year-old children (page 103).
- Provide information on successful parenting practices to parents of preschool children (page 106).
- Design a system of valid and reliable assessments of student performance so that students, parents, and teachers can work to correct deficiencies. (page 109).
- Establish alternative programs for dropouts to attain basic skills and high school completion (page 111).

**Technology**
- Develop district plans for the purchase and use of educational technologies (page 130).
- Develop and establish continuous staff training programs in the appropriate use of technology to solve instructional and management problems (page 130).

**School Facilities**
- Provide for shared use of facilities, with particular attention to community groups providing daycare and services for latchkey children (page 147).

## Role of the Department of Education Outlined

Peter Greer, Deputy Under Secretary of Education, outlined the role of the U.S. Department of Education in Project Education Reform: *Time For Results*. Speaking to the 16 site leaders at the meeting in Columbia, Missouri in March, Greer stated that the Department of Education and the National Governors' Association are partners in this project.

Greer emphasized that the major thrust of this project is at the state and local levels where the schools are. "What the Department of Education can do is offer technical assistance, consultation, and referral services. We will also assist in doing a thorough evaluation and assessment of the projects."

IF YOU WOULD LIKE ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ABOUT THIS PROJECT, PLEASE WRITE, Peter Greer, Deputy Under Secretary, U.S. Department of Education, Room 3073, 400 Maryland Ave. SW., Washington, DC 20202

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# Project Education Reform: *Time For Results*

**Volume 1, Number 2** **September 1987**

This newsletter is distributed by the Office of Educational Research and Improvement, United States Department of Education, on behalf of Project Education Reform: *Time For Results*.

## Site Update: Oak Ridge Schools, Tennessee

*Dr. Robert J. Smallridge*
*Superintendent, Oak Ridge Schools*
*Oak Ridge, Tennessee*

Many of the points which the governors made in their 1991 Report on Education applied to our district. For example, we are proud of our work over the last 18 years with "at risk" 3- and 4-year-olds. This program, funded by creatively combining Chapter 1, Head Start, and local funds, has served well over 100 students each year. The results of the program support the governors' assertion that early childhood language development, for example, is imperative for school success.

Our professional growth and evaluation activities for teachers and administrators have always been strong. We maintain a systemwide inservice program based on education leadership objectives.

Flexibility, a key word in the governors' report, is also important to our staff. After a decade of fairly standardized scheduling and curricula, we recognize the need to explore new arrangements in scheduling and course development to meet the needs of a continuously learning staff and student body.

When the State Governor's office told us that Oak Ridge Schools was one of two exemplary school systems in Tennessee selected for Project Education Reform, we were inspired to develop some new thrusts and augment our old ones. We pulled together a team of teachers and administrators to brainstorm about the 13 reform actions suggested by the governors. We spent several sessions employing "blue sky" strategies to determine the best and

*continued on page 4*

## What Are the Results? Assessment, Evaluation, and Resources

*The Governors' 1991 Report on Education: Time for Results* made a clarion call for results in educating the Nation's children in exchange for deregulation of local schools. Through Project Education Reform: Time For Results, 16 school districts will test their methods of improving education. Ultimately, the conclusions from this project could be useful to other States and school systems as they attempt to make schools better without unnecessary, burdensome regulation.

How will these efforts be measured? The U.S. Department of Education will assist the National Governors' Association in evaluating and assessing the projects. Peter Greer, Deputy Under Secretary, U.S. Department of Education, calls this project "a license for innovation," and outcomes will be measured against goals. He says the documentation used to evaluate the projects should not impede innovation.

Dr. Milton Goldberg, Director of Programs for the Improvement of Practice of the Office of Educational Research and Improvement (OERI), will help oversee the evaluation. While each of the 16 school systems is encouraged to develop its own assessment mechanisms, certain questions apply to all: How will outcomes be identified and measured? How will activities be planned and implemented? How will various constituencies be involved? How will descriptions of practices and findings be disseminated?

Dr. Goldberg says that the regional laboratories (described on page 2), research centers, and the Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC), all funded by the U.S. Department of Education, can help answer these questions. "This project is a terrific opportunity for the labs, centers, and ERIC to be of real service to the schools. Few of the 16 sites use these resources now, so this should really widen their base of information." When requesting assistance, site leaders should ask for a synthesis of the research on a given topic, as well as the work developed by lab staff.

**Oak Ridge Schools staff members work on Time For Results proposal. Staff members left to right: Jim Bolstedt, Cathy Colglazier, Pete Cohan, and Tom Hayes.**

## Milestones

Project Education Reform will probably continue through 1991, coinciding with the spirit and intent of *Time For Results: The Governors' 1991 Report on Education*. At that time, a comprehensive report will be released detailing the progress, accomplishments, and obstacles identified by the 16 sites.

| | |
|---|---|
| August 1986 | The Nation's governors call for increased accountability and greater flexibility in American education in *Time For Results: The Governors' 1991 Report on Education*. The report is the result of a yearlong study by the NGA task force which conducted hearings throughout the Nation with more than 1,000 educators, administrators, researchers, parents, students, and citizens. |
| November 1986 | U.S. Department of Education officials, eight governors, and their respective local site leaders form a consortium in an innovative example of Federal/State/local effort designed to study and pilot NGA recommendations. |
| December 1986 | Eight governors and/or their representatives and superintendents and/or principals of the 16 school sites meet with U.S. Department of Education officials in Washington, DC. |
| February 1987 | Peter Greer of the U.S. Department of Education meets with some of the district representatives. |
| March 1987 | Governor John Ashcroft invites the U.S. Education Department to hold its first major reporting session; the 2-day conference is held in Columbia, Missouri. |
| May 1987 | The consortium of eight governors, their respective local school-site representatives, and U.S. Department of Education officials release the first newsletter, which provides an overview of the project. |
| July 1987 | The National Governors' Association presents its first scheduled report at the session in Coeur d'Alene, Idaho. |
| October 1987 | The next meeting of the 16 school-site leaders will be held in Washington, DC. |

## Regional Educational Laboratories: Purpose and Functions

Nine regional laboratories carry out applied research and development and provide assistance for educators, parents, and decisionmakers in the 50 States, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, and the Pacific Trust Territories. Each laboratory serves a geographic region and is governed by an independent board of directors.

Laboratories plan programs based on regional needs, current trends in research and practice, and interaction with agencies and institutions which assist communities and schools with educational improvement. The goal of the laboratories is to improve schools and classrooms through five tasks:

1. Working with regional organizations to apply research and improve schools. Partner organizations include State departments of education, intermediate school districts and intradistrict collaboratives, universities, colleges, and State associations of educators and parents.
2. Assisting State-level policymakers with the implications of educational research and practice for policies and programs.
3. Conducting applied research and developing materials, programs, and publications that support school and classroom improvement.
4. Collaborating with other laboratories, research centers, and national associations to extend and enhance related research and development.
5. Developing effective internal management, governance, planning, and self-evaluation, as well as reviewing regional needs and developments.

For additional information, write The Office of Educational Research and Improvement, Information Office, Room 300, 555 New Jersey Avenue NW., Washington, DC 20208-1325, or the individual laboratories listed on this page.

**Regional Educational Laboratories**

Dr. Terry L. Eidell
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# The Nation's Report Card: Evaluating Education from the National Perspective

At a time when States and local school districts are assessing their educational programs, the U.S. Department of Education has focused on what can be done at the National level to help in this effort. In September 1985, Secretary of Education William J. Bennett called for a partnership among educators, policymakers, and the general public to improve "the barometer of our educational performance as a society, the report card on American education, that helps us understand how our sons and daughters – and our schools – are doing." This report card, the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), is the Federally funded project, initiated more than 20 years ago, that tests a nationally representative sample of 9-, 13-, and 17-year-olds in reading, writing, science, mathematics, and other areas.

In the spring of 1986 Secretary Bennett asked Lamar Alexander, then Governor of Tennessee and Chairman of the National Governors' Association, to head a major effort to update this national report card. Together, they formed a 22-member study group of educators, testing experts, State officials, and private citizens. The Secretary asked Governor Alexander to consider the whole universe of issues associated with national assessment, pay particular attention to the needs of States, and concentrate on four broad areas of assessment:

1. roles and responsibilities;
2. content and coverage;
3. design and structure; and
4. costs.

The study group deliberated for 9 months under the direction of H. Thomas James, president emeritus of the Spencer Foundation and former dean of Stanford University's School of Education. It held meetings around the country that were open to the public, commissioned 46 papers, and convened nine committees to examine specific questions in detail. The report, *The Nation's Report Card: Improving the Assessment of Student Achievement*, published this year, culminates a noteworthy effort in response to the Secretary's concern for strengthening the Nation's ability to provide every child with an opportunity to achieve educational excellence.

The study group concluded that the design and budget for NAEP has not kept pace with the expanding needs for information about our schools. Assessment should be broader in scope: ". . . while providing excellent information on what our children know and can do, [NAEP] provides it only for the Nation *as a whole*. . . . But in the United States education is a *State* responsibility, and it is against the performance closer to home that we want and need to compare the performance of our youngsters."

**Secretary of Education William J. Bennett addresses the issues associated with the *Nation's Report Card.***

The study group recommended that data collection be expanded to permit regular reporting on a State-by-State basis as well as for the whole Nation. This change was endorsed by the Chief State School Officers, who increasingly need reliable information about educational achievement within their States and how students' learning is changing over time. In addition to assessing the core content areas of reading, writing, mathematics, science and technology, history, geography, and civics, these assessments should emphasize higher order thinking skills, such as evaluating evidence, weighing alternative courses of action, and constructing reasoned arguments. Assessments should also occur more frequently than in the past.

The study group also recommended the establishment of an Educational Assessment Council, independent of the U.S. Department of Education, that would make policy, set the design for NAEP, and allow for the substantial participation of States, localities, testing specialists, and other experts. This broadly representative council would assure protection of the public interest from political intrusion. In other areas, the Alexander-James panel concluded that the grade-level sample should be changed from the present grades 3, 7, and 11 to the "transitional" grades of 4, 8, and 12.

Estimates indicate that the cost to the Federal Government for this expanded assessment would be about $26 million annually. However, this increased Federal support is necessary to have the kind of data needed to plan well and to achieve the Nation's essential goals of better schools, better jobs, and a stronger people.

In thanking the study group for its report, Secretary Bennett noted that the country is witnessing a ground swell of support for greater accountability at all levels of education and that this report is an important step toward instituting that accountability at all the Nation's elementary and secondary schools.

A copy of the report *The Nation's Report Card* can be ordered from the National Academy of Education, Harvard Graduate School of Education, 108 Longfellow Hall, Cambridge, Massachusetts 02138 at a cost of $9.

# What Is Project Education Reform: Time For Results?

Project Education Reform: Time For Results is an experimental program involving 16 school sites in 8 States. Each school site serves as an informal laboratory, conducting and evaluating new programs as part of the education reform movement. This project was developed in response to suggestions made in *Time For Results, The Governors' 1991 Report on Education*, a report by the National Governors' Association (NGA) on how schools can be improved. It says that schools should learn from organizations where greater

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## Oak Ridge Schools

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most ideal activities to pursue. We spent a session whittling those dreams into what was realistic to begin in the next 2 years. We clustered some of the areas into the three main directions outlined below.

First, we are expanding our efforts with "at risk" preschool children by initiating parent education programs. By next year, we will have programs for parents of newborns through 18-year-olds. The training and classes will be coordinated by the schools in conjunction with local agencies. We believe we can serve our students better in the long run by assisting their parents. We know that parents are teachers, too.

Second, we are pursuing a "collegiate" model for scheduling classes and investigating an 18-hour day block for early and late classes and options for short- and long-term classes with 2- to 4-day a week meetings. We are studying a 12-month school year for yearlong learning opportunities. We hope to pilot several classes in our secondary schools that would be more flexible.

Through the State career ladder program, several teachers will "mentor" both new and seasoned colleagues. We also want to build in additional flexibility for staff members to have new or dual appointments within the school structure. An English teacher who writes poetry, for example, might serve as "poet in residence" for a term; a teacher whose hobby is building log cabins might be a consultant to the Pioneer Union for elementary grades.

Third, we are intrigued by the technology thrust in the governors' report. Oak Ridge has a national reputation for its work with the national laboratories. Our local resources in technology are numerous, and we have begun to tap that source. We want to infuse broadbased technology opportunities for students across grade levels and through the curricula. We are collaborating with the local high-tech corridor to provide greater access for students and teachers.

The Time For Results follow-up project will allow expansion of the success of our longstanding programs and will allow further documentation. We look forward to the new challenges, and to assessing the outcomes of our expanded programs and providing other schools with the information gained from this experiment.

*Each newsletter will feature the activities of a Time For Results project site.*

## Time For Results

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employee involvement has produced higher morale and increased productivity. The report recommends changes in educational training and certification requirements for principals, incentives to promote school-site management, new ways to evaluate principals, and rewards for principals and schools that perform effectively.

A copy of *Time For Results*, the governors' report, can be ordered for $12.95 from the Publications Office, National Governors' Association, Hall of the States, 400 North Capitol Street, Washington, DC 20001-1572; telephone (202) 624-5330. Another publication, *Results in Education 1987*, a report on the first year follow-up to the study, is also available from the National Governors' Association at the address above for $12.50. Discount prices are offered for both publications when ordering 10 or more copies.

**The next issue will highlight Time For Results project activities at the National Governors' Association annual meeting held in July.**

IF YOU WOULD LIKE ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ABOUT THIS PROJECT, PLEASE WRITE
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# Project Education Reform: *Time For Results*

**Volume 1, Number 3** **December 1987**

This newsletter is distributed by the Office of Educational Research and Improvement, United States Department of Education, on behalf of Project Education Reform: *Time For Results.*

## Project Education Reform: Time For Results Presented at Governors' Meeting

Peter Greer, Deputy Under Secretary for Intergovernmental and Interagency Affairs at the U.S. Department of Education, gave an overview of Project Education Reform: Time For Results to the Nation's governors at their annual meeting held in Michigan in July. The project involves school districts that are testing recommendations from the Governors' 1991 Report to expand and improve education in their schools.

Greer used the word "unique" to describe the project – unique because the governors are the leaders in the project with the U.S. Education Department as technical advisor.

Greer said, "[State and Federal regulations which are] barriers to getting results are being identified." He added, "The 16 school sites are asking for their work to be continued from 1988 until 1991."

The project went into full swing when school opened this fall. Each school system identified its goals and outlined its plans to reach them. As a whole, the school-site leaders have found that the barriers which have inhibited education reform seem to be minimal. The problem seems to be that various local and State constituencies have their own agendas which often conflict with one another. "Traditional habits get in the way, often inhibiting a bolder approach," Greer said. "And, several national resources, such as regional education laboratories and centers [see September issue of this newsletter], are underused."

Greer noted that the eight States where the 16 school sites are located, and others, are launching exemplary projects in

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## 1991 and Beyond: Preparing for the Future

*NGA Chairman John H. Sununu, Governor of New Hampshire*

As I begin my term as Chairman of the National Governors' Association, I want to re-emphasize the importance of the governors' education project – Time For Results – on the association's agenda. During the next year, Time For Results will continue as one of the highest priorities of the NGA.

Clearly, we as governors recognize that the States have shouldered the responsibility for implementing education reform. *Time For Results: The Governors' 1991 Report on Education* demonstrated our commitment to education and outlined recommendations for meaningful reform. We realized the need for better results from our education system, and set our goal to achieve concrete improvements by 1991. As the first follow-up to our recommendations, this year's summary *Results in Education: 1987* outlines the progress made by the States thus far.

At our recent summer meeting in Michigan, the governors held a special work session to review the progress States have made on the education reforms we recommended last year. At the same time, we readied ourselves for the next step of the project.

I am pleased to report that the Governors' education project is ready to enter a new and exciting phase. This year, the NGA will take a dramatic step in its mission to improve education. That means we will be working directly with States to help them solve problems in implementing

**Governor Sununu talks with students in a New Hampshire school.**

school reform policies. The NGA will assist States in sharing the valuable information they are gathering so that collectively we can benefit from the innovative ways States are individually seeking to improve education.

To facilitate this process, the NGA will sponsor working seminars to bring together State policymakers, district educators, and members of the research community. These seminars will allow those individuals at the grassroots of education to exchange experiences and gain insights for future improvements.

NGA will also increase its involvement with the Time For Results demonstration projects underway in 16 school districts around the country. These districts are implementing different recommendations from Time For Results in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Education. Representatives from these districts will be asked to participate in working group sessions which pertain to their individual

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# Site Update: Colorado

In late fall 1986, former Colorado Governor Richard D. Lamm named Montrose County School District and Mapleton Adams School District as 2 of the 16 school sites to be in the Time For Results study. The districts were recognized as innovative and open to change. In a visit to Colorado in late August of this year, U.S. Education Secretary William J. Bennett identified the districts as "partners in reform" with the National Governors' Association and the U.S. Education Department. Part of his reason for being in Colorado was to find out what the districts have done and are doing.

## Montrose County School District

In response to the governors' challenge, Montrose is in the midst of change already. The district is starting a preschool program for handicapped children that could be expanded to include other children. It is also starting a middle school program that will house sixth and seventh graders at one school and eighth and ninth graders at another.

Montrose wants parents and teachers to be involved in the accountability of schools. It also wants to hold open forums on education, arranging speakers for parents' groups. Finally, the district wants to continue the efforts in dropout prevention and adopt a Second Chance adult diploma.

Secretary Bennett said he was impressed with the efforts of Superintendent Bob Cito and the community's rallying behind the district and its superintendent. Cito has launched a cooperative effort with University of Colorado President E. Gordon Gee and University of Colorado Regent Dr. Charles Abernathy to create an advanced studies program so that students can get college credit for what they learn in high school.

In addition to these specific projects, Montrose County School District is focusing on 5 of the 13 broad recommendations made by the governors in their 1991 report. They are:

1. Redesigning the schools' organization to create more productive working and learning environments;
2. Creating a structure and climate for effective parent involvement;
3. Establishing early childhood development programs for at-risk 3- and 4-year-olds;
4. Providing information on successful parenting practices to parents of preschool children;
5. Establishing alternative programs for dropouts to attain basic skills and complete high school.

**Secretary of Education William J. Bennett (L) listens to Montrose County School Superintendent Robert A. Cito (R) describe the reforms proposed for his district.**

## Mapleton Adams County School District

The Mapleton District is establishing "results centers" in each of its 11 schools. The centers will expand preschool classes and the elementary school day and year to increase instructional time. They will launch an after-school academic and activities program for latchkey children. In addition, they will provide computer lab facilities and take-home computer programs for parents to increase their involvement and will recruit community volunteers to tutor in the computer labs. Diagnostic/prescriptive computer labs will be expanded in the subject areas of high school math and English.

The centers will also develop inhouse alternatives and postsecondary programs in cooperation with Colorado colleges and universities to increase educational opportunities for minority or at-risk senior high school students. They will establish school-business partnerships with the Colorado Alliance for Business and the School to Work Action Program to provide a closer link between schools and business. Finally, a core curriculum program will be established to individualize education for 9th and 10th grade students.

## Secretary Bennett Stresses Accountability

Secretary Bennett kicked off the school year in the Mapleton Adams district by outlining how the "tough doctrine" of accountability should work in education.

"We need to reward success and stop failure in our schools," insisted Bennett. He observed that in the past, only rarely have we rewarded or reprimanded either good or bad performances by teachers and principals. He also emphasized the need for higher expectations in student achievement and more emphasis on content and higher standards. Bennett further stated that the bottom line is increasing the performance of students.

Bennett said that there also needs to be a focus on where money is spent. Twenty years ago, he said, 55 percent was spent on teachers, and now, 41 percent is spent on them. He recommended that more money be spent on teachers.

# Education Still Central on Governors' Agenda

At its annual meeting in July, the National Governors' Association (NGA) reported that States continue to emphasize education reform. The report, based on a 50-State survey by the association, says that improved teaching dominates, but school leadership and management are receiving increased attention as States link rewards and sanctions to performance. The report, *Results in Education: 1987*, is the first annual follow-up to *Time For Results: The Governors' 1991 Report on Education*, released last year.

New Jersey Governor Thomas H. Kean, NGA Lead Governor on Education, said, "A year ago, governors gave each other advice on how to improve schools. Are we taking our own advice? This report shows that we are."

"But we did not issue this report to celebrate," he continued. "We are not yet satisfied." Governor Kean asked governors to "help reinvent the school for modern times. Many schools operate as they have for generations," he said, "but now States have new tools for a better approach."

He also urged governors to help renew the historic education partnership with the Federal Government. "Education excellence will require the energies of the States and localities as well as the Federal Government," he concluded.

The survey found that during the past year, States paid growing attention to the needs of at-risk youth, as evidenced by early childhood education and remedial or alternative education programs. They were also concerned with the quality of higher education as shown by encouraging colleges and universities to define their missions more clearly and assess how well they accomplish them.

In addition to these needs, States have concentrated on the following policy areas:

**Teaching.** More than 20 States have developed strategies for recruiting and retraining teachers. Twenty-three States permit alternative certification through internships, special courses, or performance assessment. Tennessee, Georgia, New Jersey, and North Carolina certify teachers based on demonstrated skills and knowledge, and other States, such as Alaska, Colorado, Kentucky, and Minnesota, are considering this approach. Eighteen States have adopted or are developing new career ladders for teachers.

**Leadership and Management.** States are raising standards for administrators, especially principals. Nearly half are moving toward new methods of certification, selection, or on-the-job evaluation. Certification requirements for principals and administrators in Florida, Misssissippi, Missouri, New Hampshire, and North Carolina are competency based. Florida and Mississippi also use performance-based evaluation and compensation to reward administrators' performance. States are beginning to waive regulations and encourage local autonomy through pilot projects. Colorado, Minnesota, and Washington have made local autonomy an incentive for schools to assume greater accountability for their performance. The 16 school sites participating in Project Education Reform: Time For Results are testing local programs, identifying and waiving regulations that hinder school decisionmaking about instruction, and promoting cooperative relationships—beyond just the State—with other school systems and education associations, for example.

**Parent Involvement and Choice.** At least half the States assist school districts in bringing parents into schools or involving them in their children's education. Arkansas, Indiana, Mississippi, and Virginia require parent involvement for school accreditation, while Delaware and Oklahoma require teachers to be trained in effective parent involvement practices for certification. Kentucky and Tennessee offer programs that combine parenting with basic skills instruction. Twenty-one States offer training in sound parenting practices most often for parents of preschool, handicapped, migrant, or at-risk children.

**Readiness of At-Risk Children.** Twenty-five States currently fund programs to help at-risk preschoolers. In 1987, Connecticut, Indiana, and Vermont, for example, legislated support for these programs. In general, the programs serve at-risk 4-year-olds. Also, States recognize the need to help youngsters meet basic standards throughout their school years. Twenty-seven States pay for compensatory education programs to help children overcome education deficiencies. Realizing that helping at-risk youngsters may prevent students from dropping out, many States have initiated a broad range of dropout prevention programs.

**Education Technology.** States continue to use computer, video, and other technology to improve instruction and school management. About one-third of the States encourage local school systems to develop formal plans to use technology. Twenty-nine States hold annual technology conferences, topical workshops, and regional training sessions for educators.

**School Facilities.** States have been more concerned with the use of buildings than with their maintenance; they do not monitor the physical condition of buildings, for example. But they have promoted full use of schools by helping districts use their buildings better. They have encouraged sharing facilities with the community by identifying models of such use and applying funding formulas and passing legislation that make it easier for mixed use. States also support school-based day care and programs for latchkey children. They may encourage year-round use of buildings, although the decision is usually left to the school district. Some States encourage the use of schools in the summer for handicapped, special education, or at-risk students.

**College Quality.** Fewer than one dozen States require State colleges and universities to include information on the assessment of student performance as part of the instruction role and mission of the schools. While 75 percent of all higher education institutions will introduce some form of assessment in the next few years, according to a recent survey by the American Council on Education, only 25 percent reported that their States require assessment of student performance. The link between assessment and a school's accountability still remains elusive.

Based on these activities and other findings from the NGA survey, the next steps the governors' report recommends that the States consider are:

- remove State regulations that interfere with local efforts to restructure schools;
- assume larger responsibility for setting education goals and defining standards;
- develop appropriate and effective sanctions for consistently poor performance by school districts;
- stimulate innovation and inventiveness at the local level on the part of school boards, administrators, and teachers; and
- develop tests and other assessment tools that more appropriately reflect desired educational outcomes.

## 1991 and Beyond

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reform priorities.

I am particularly pleased that the NGA will have this opportunity to interact with educators and officials at the local level to gain their insights on these projects. In New Hampshire, our demonstration projects have focused on the effective use of technology and the role of the principal in our schools. Having served as the Chairman of the Task Force on Technology, where I encouraged the effective use of technology in our classrooms, I am especially proud of New Hampshire's efforts which serve as models for many other States.

The governors' leadership in fostering these important initiatives demonstrates the strength of our commitment to education reform. Improving the productivity and creativity of America's schools remains vital to our future, and I am proud that the Nation's governors are leading the way in this area. As Chairman of the NGA, I will work to ensure that we continue our aggressive efforts to achieve results in education—results that will ensure a productive future for all our citizens.

## Time For Results Presented at Governors' Meeting

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reform-minded districts. Projects tend to deal with such issues as choice in public schools and decentralizing district authority, as well as curriculum issues surrounding the teaching of the U.S. Constitution, geography, and moral literacy, for example. Parental responsibility at school and school-business practices are also being defined.

Jim Wilsford, Superintendent of Orangeburg County School District in South Carolina, one of the Time For Results school sites, also participated in the presentation. He emphasized that the district already has authority to make changes, but, because of some State regulations, he may lose State funds unless rules on teacher loads, for example, are changed to give schools more flexibility.

## Time For Results

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**The next issue will highlight the school-site leaders' meeting in Washington, D.C.**

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